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May 23, 2011

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. President, Majority Leader Reid, Speaker Boehner, Minority Leader McConnell, and  
Minority Leader Pelosi:

In an ever-competitive, global economy, it is important that the United States act on new and expanded trade agreements in order to achieve greater economic prosperity through international trade. Three such agreements appear to be near at hand and we offer bipartisan support for the South Korean, Colombian, and Panamanian trade agreements. In addition, we also encourage support for the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and urge Congress to once again grant fast-track trade negotiation authority to the President.

As the chief executives of our respective states and territories, we appreciate how important international trade and investment are to the economic vitality of our jurisdictions, presenting important opportunities for workers, and enhancing our overall competitiveness. Export-related jobs pay better than non-exporting industries and, with nearly 95 percent of the world's consumers living outside of the U.S., exports have been the focus of increased job growth in recent years. Much of the improvement in our nation's trade balance can be linked to the enactment of several free trade agreements (e.g., Chile, Singapore, Australia, Israel, and Jordan), thus our belief in an aggressive expansion of foreign markets for U.S. goods and services beginning with South Korea, Colombia, and Panama.

We must think holistically about international trade and recognize that world trade can cause economic adjustments that require training and temporary support to individuals in impacted industries. As such, the TAA program, which was first established in 1963, is a critical program to move in tandem with free trade agreements in order to help American workers adapt to changes in the global marketplace and assist them in securing new opportunities in which they can excel.

Since 1974, Congress has granted every U.S. President fast-track trade negotiation authority. President Obama should hold the same authority to conclude complex trade agreements in a timely manner that can keep pace with our global competitors. Without fast-track authority, the United States' ability to expand and open markets around the world is constrained significantly, and U.S. businesses and agricultural producers will likely lose market opportunities and jobs to other countries.

Strong bipartisan leadership is needed to create opportunities for America's workers. We stand ready to further support you in those efforts.

Sincerely,



Governor Robert Bentley  
Alabama



Governor Mike Beebe  
Arkansas



Governor John Hickenlooper  
Colorado



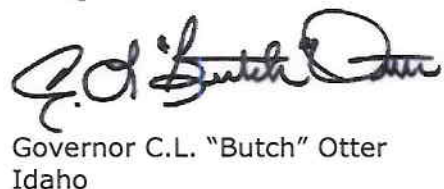
Governor Dan Malloy  
Connecticut



Governor Nathan Deal  
Georgia



Governor Eddie Calvo  
Guam



Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter  
Idaho



Governor Mitch Daniels  
Indiana



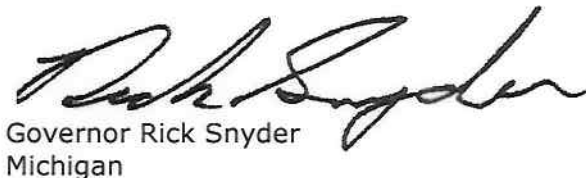
Governor Terry E. Branstad  
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Kansas



Governor Paul R. LePage  
Maine



Governor Rick Snyder  
Michigan



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Mississippi



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Nebraska



Governor Brian Sandoval  
Nevada



Governor Mary Fallin  
Oklahoma



Governor Luis G. Fortuño  
Puerto Rico



Governor Dennis Daugaard  
South Dakota



Governor Christine O. Gregoire  
Washington

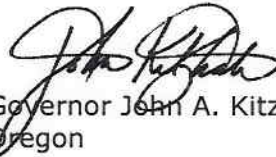


Governor Matthew Mead  
Wyoming

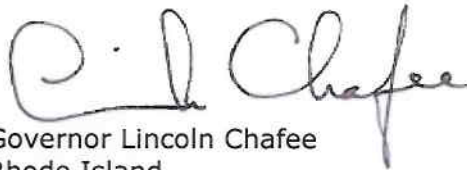
cc: Ambassador Ron Kirk



Governor Chris Christie  
New Jersey



Governor John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.  
Oregon



Governor Lincoln Chafee  
Rhode Island



Governor Gary R. Herbert  
Utah



Governor Scott Walker  
Wisconsin